

MARVEL

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LGY#759

**JUDGMENT
DAY IS
COMING**



EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES

THE AVENGERS



**AARON
GARRÓN
CURIEL**

And there came a day, a day unlike any other, when Earth's mightiest heroes found themselves united against a common threat! On that day, the Avengers were born--to fight the foes no single super hero could withstand!

The demon Mephisto has been bedeviling the Avengers, traveling through time in an effort to unravel their history. The Avengers have embarked on their own journey through time, seeking to protect the very first Avengers in the prehistoric past. The team's pursuit of Mephisto has thus far led them to various periods of history where they have been aided by their heroic predecessors.

#59



HISTORY'S MIGHTIEST HEROES, PART THREE THE WILD WEST'S WILDEST OUTLAW AVENGERS IN... "DEATH RIDES THE SKY RAILS" By Jason Aaron & Javier Garrón

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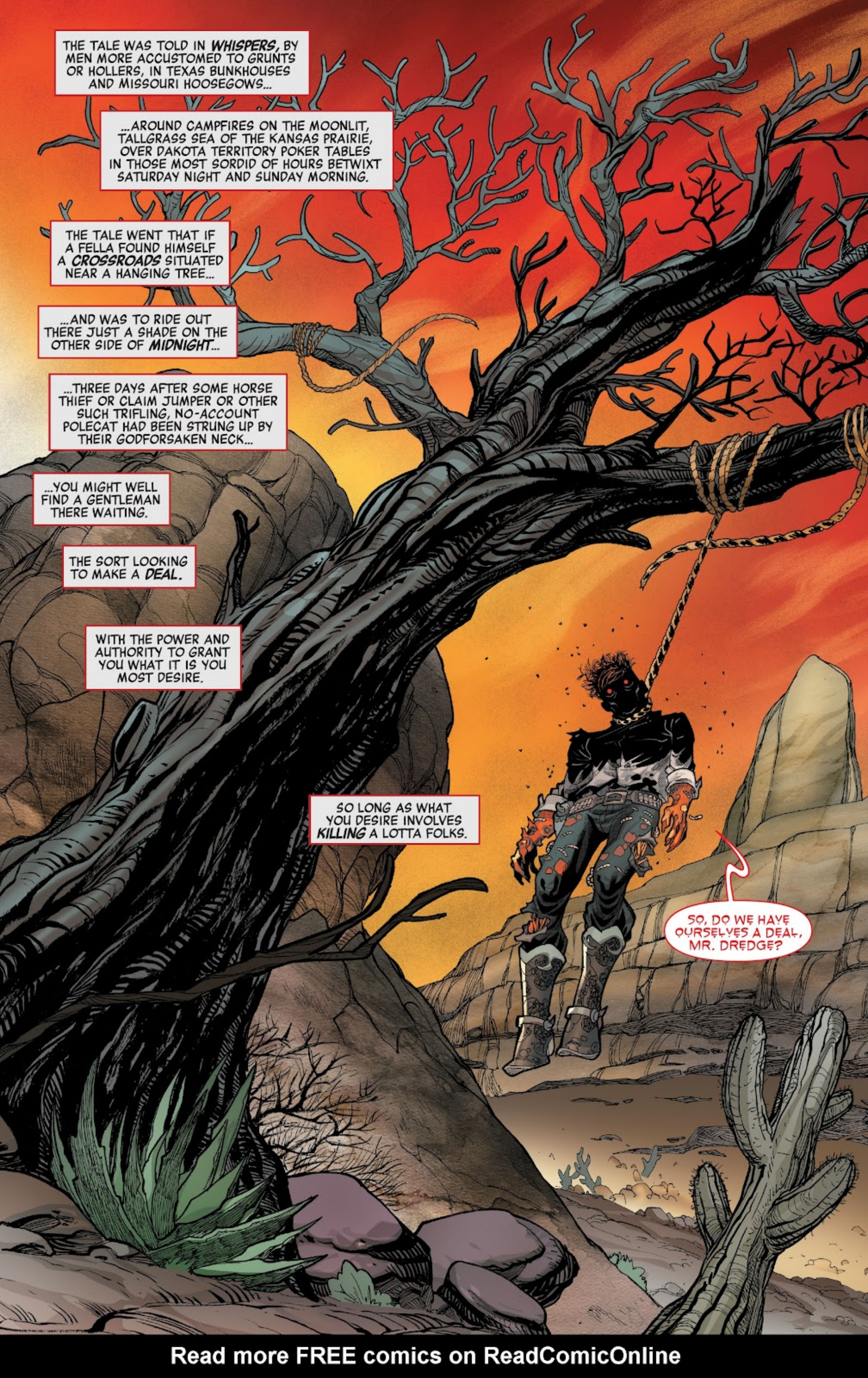
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AVENGERS CREATED BY STAN LEE & JACK KIRBY



THE TALE WAS TOLD IN *WHISPERS*, BY MEN MORE ACCUSTOMED TO GRUNTS OR HOLLERS, IN TEXAS BUNKHOUSES AND MISSOURI HOOSEGOWS...

...AROUND CAMPFIRES ON THE MOONLIT, TALLGRASS SEA OF THE KANSAS PRAIRIE, OVER DAKOTA TERRITORY POKER TABLES IN THOSE MOST SORDID OF HOURS BETWIXT SATURDAY NIGHT AND SUNDAY MORNING.

THE TALE WENT THAT IF A FELLA FOUND HIMSELF A *CROSSROADS* SITUATED NEAR A HANGING TREE...

...AND WAS TO RIDE OUT THERE JUST A SHADE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF *MIDNIGHT*...

...THREE DAYS AFTER SOME HORSE THIEF OR CLAIM JUMPER OR OTHER SUCH TRIFLING, NO-ACCOUNT POLECAT HAD BEEN STRUNG UP BY THEIR GODFORSOKEN NECK...

...YOU MIGHT WELL FIND A GENTLEMAN THERE WAITING.

THE SORT LOOKING TO MAKE A *DEAL*.

WITH THE POWER AND AUTHORITY TO GRANT YOU WHAT IT IS YOU MOST DESIRE.

SO LONG AS WHAT YOU DESIRE INVOLVES KILLING A LOTTA FOLKS.

SO, DO WE HAVE OURSELVES A DEAL, MR. DREDGE?



YOU'RE SAYING YOU CAN MAKE ME THE FASTEST GUNSLINGER IN ALL ARIZONA? RIGHT HERE, TONIGHT? AND IT WON'T COST ME ONE RED CENT?

YOUR GUN HAND WILL BE AS SWIFT AS A STRIKING RATTLESNAKE AND DECIDEDLY MORE DEADLY. I'VE TAKEN THE LIBERTY OF DRAWING UP THE PAPERS.

I AIN'T MUCH FOR LITERATING.



THEN THAT SHOULD SPEED THINGS ALONG QUITE NICELY. JUST MAKE YOUR X AND THE DEAL IS DONE.



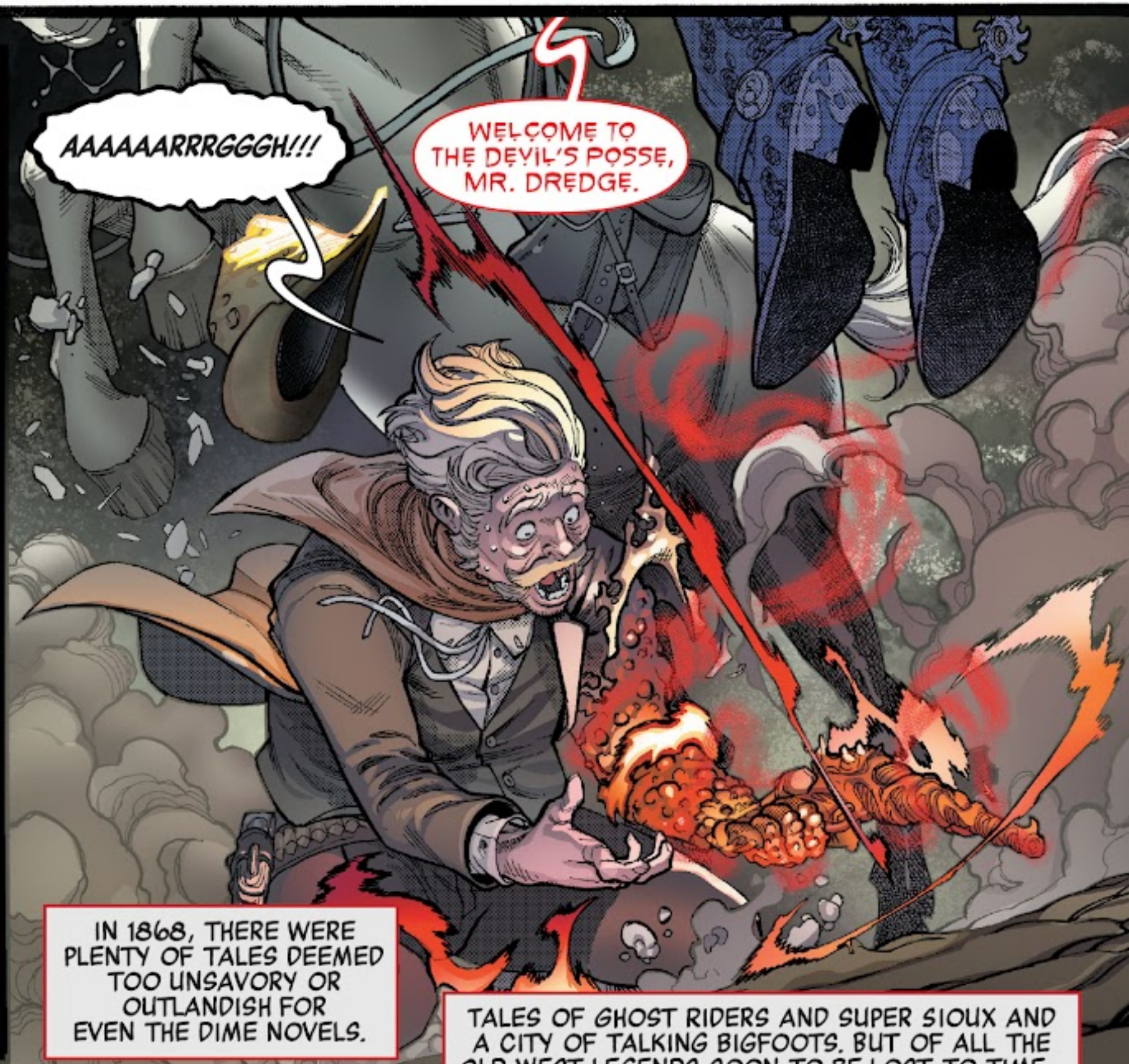
I DON'T... FEEL NO DIFFERENT. NO FASTER.

AH, BUT THE SECRET IS IN THE TOOLS. TRY MY PISTOL.



IT'S KILLED MORE MEN THAN THE PLAGUES OF EGYPT.

AND IT IS ALWAYS HUNGRY FOR ONE MORE.



AAAAAARRRGH!!!

WELCOME TO THE DEVIL'S POSSE, MR. DREDGE.

IN 1868, THERE WERE PLENTY OF TALES DEEMED TOO UNSAVORY OR OUTLANDISH FOR EVEN THE DIME NOVELS.

TALES OF GHOST RIDERS AND SUPER SIOUX AND A CITY OF TALKING BIGFOOTS. BUT OF ALL THE OLD WEST LEGENDS SOON TO BE LOST TO TIME...

...NONE BLAZED A TRAIL
QUITE LIKE **RENO PHOENIX**
AND **THE STARBRAND KID**.

RENO...

THAT
WHAT I THINK
IT IS?



SURE AS
SHOOT IS, KID,
SHI'AR SKY TRAIN,
PACKED WITH A
FRESH LOAD OF
CARGO.

SORRY
BUNCH A BIRD-
HEADED ROBBER
BARONS.

THEY GOT
THREE **WARBIRDS**
WAITING IN ORBIT, READY
TO ESCORT THEM ALL
THE WAY BACK TO
THEIR BIG SPACE
PLANTATION.



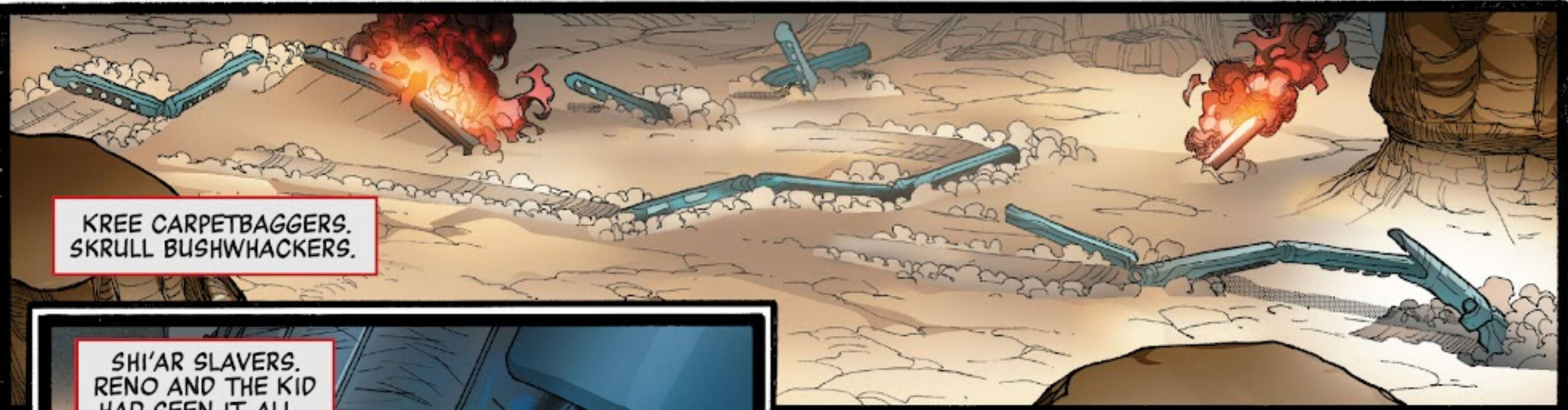
I SEE
'EM.

MUST BE FIFTY MILES
FROM HERE TO THE EDGE
OF SPACE. RECKON THOSE
WARBIRDS FIGURE THEY'RE
OUT OF YOUR RANGE.

RECKON
THEY DO.







KREE CARPETBAGGERS.
SKRULL BUSHWHACKERS.

SHI'AR SLAVERS.
RENO AND THE KID
HAD SEEN IT ALL.

IT SEEMED DEATH WAS
ALWAYS RIDING THE SKY
RAILS, COMING FOR OUR
BACKWOODS, PODUNK
PLANET FROM ALL CORNERS
OF THE GALACTIC FRONTIER.

EVERYBODY,
THIS WAY.
YOU'RE FREE
TO GO.



BUT SOMETIMES
THE WORST RUSTLERS
AND HELLBENDERS...



...WERE
HOMEGROWN.



AMBUSH!

I'LL HOLD
'EM OFF! GET
THEM PEOPLE
OUTTA HERE,
RENO!

TOO
LATE!



ROPING
PEOPLE LIKE
STEERS! WHO THE
HELL ARE THESE
HOMBRES?

YOU
STAY ALIVE,
KID!



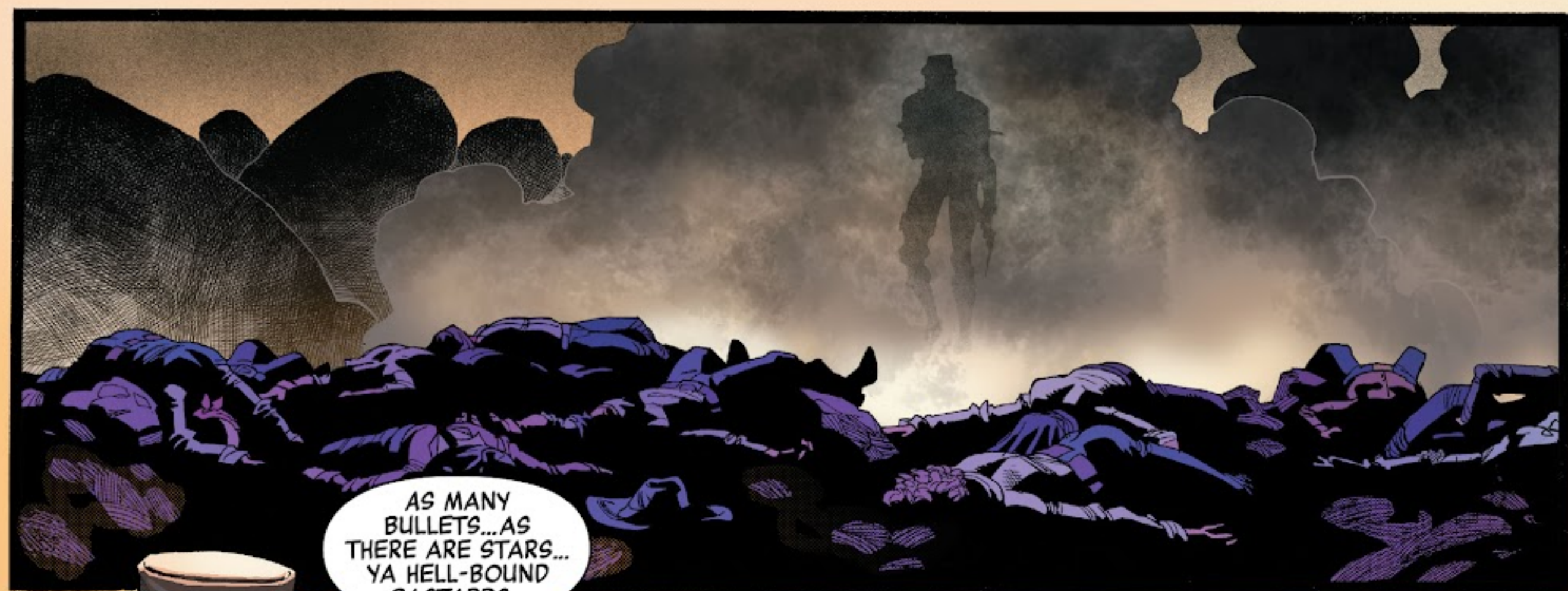
YEAH, NO
PROBLEMO.

THE
STARBRAND KID.
HEARD ABOUT THEM
PISTOLS OF YOURS.
HEARD THEY'RE
LOADED WITH PIECES
OF SPACE ROCK.

HEH.
WELL...



...LET'S JUST
SEE HOW MANY
BULLETS THEY
GOT IN--



AS MANY
BULLETS...AS
THERE ARE STARS...
YA HELL-BOUND
BASTARDS.

YEAH, AND
JUST HOW MANY
BULLETS YOU
FIGURE IT'LL
TAKE...



...TO
BRING YOU
DOWN?

I'D GUESS
ABOUT THIS
MANY!



HIYAH!
FASTER,
RED!





GAGH! TOO MANY OF THEM! AND THEM GUNS OF THEIRS ARE HELL-FORGED!

THESE ARE THE DEVIL'S OWN GUNHANDS!

BUT WE'LL SET THE WHOLE BLAMED SKY ON FIRE IF WE GOT TO!

RIDE ON, RED! WE FIGHT TO THE LAST DAMN EMBER!



EVEN AMID THE HAIL OF HELLFIRE, RENO BECAME AWARE OF THE BEATING OF MIGHTY WINGS.

AND THEN THE PHOENIX WHISPERED TO HER, IN THAT VOICE THAT SOUNDED LIKE SMOKE FROM A BONFIRE BURNING EVERYWHERE AT ONCE.

"WE ARE FIRE AND LIFE INCARNATE," IT SAID.





"WE ARE THE
PHOENIX. AND WE
PERSEVERE."

WHO THE
HELL?



THERE WAS NO TIME FOR WORDS,
BUT NONE WERE NEEDED.

PHOENIX SPOKE TO
PHOENIX THE WAY
FLAME SPEAKS TO FLAME.

BY BURNING
BRIGHTER TOGETHER.

AND CONSUMING
EVERYTHING THAT
WAS NOT THEM.









CLOSE
ENOUGH.

STARBRAND, WE'RE
HERE TO HELP. YOU
AND YOUR PARTNER
ARE UNDER ATTACK
BY A MONSTER
CALLED MEPHISTO.

HE'S TRYING TO
TAKE DOWN HISTORY'S
GREATEST HEROES,
ONE ERA AT A--





THIS GUY
AGAIN.

I THINK IT'S
ABOUT TIME
HE AND I HAD
A CHAT.



ALMOST...



NO! HE
SHOT THE
ROPES!

RENO CARLOTTA
KNEW WHAT IT
WAS LIKE TO FALL.

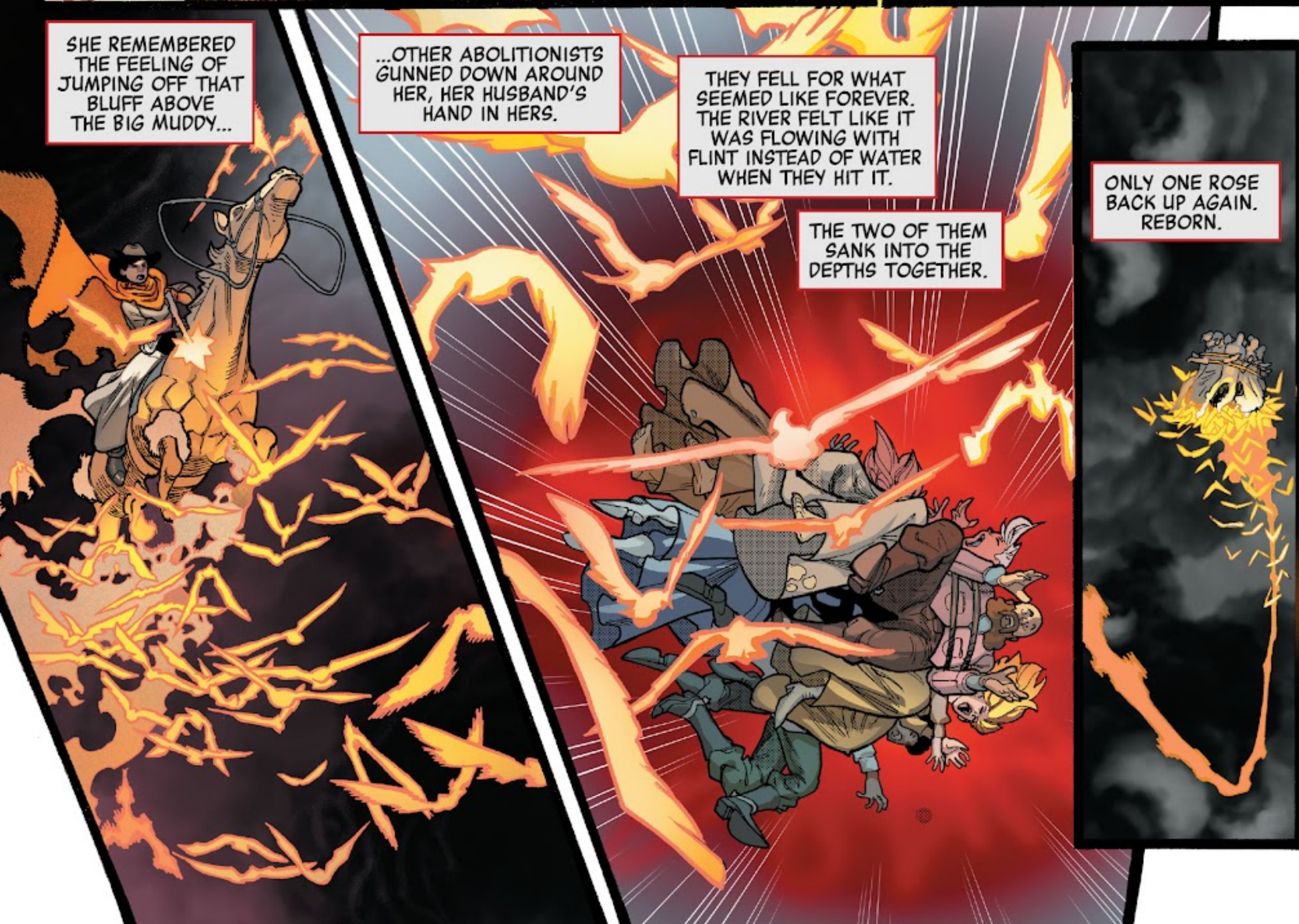
SHE REMEMBERED
THE FEELING OF
JUMPING OFF THAT
BLUFF ABOVE
THE BIG MUDDY...

...OTHER ABOLITIONISTS
GUNNED DOWN AROUND
HER, HER HUSBAND'S
HAND IN HER.

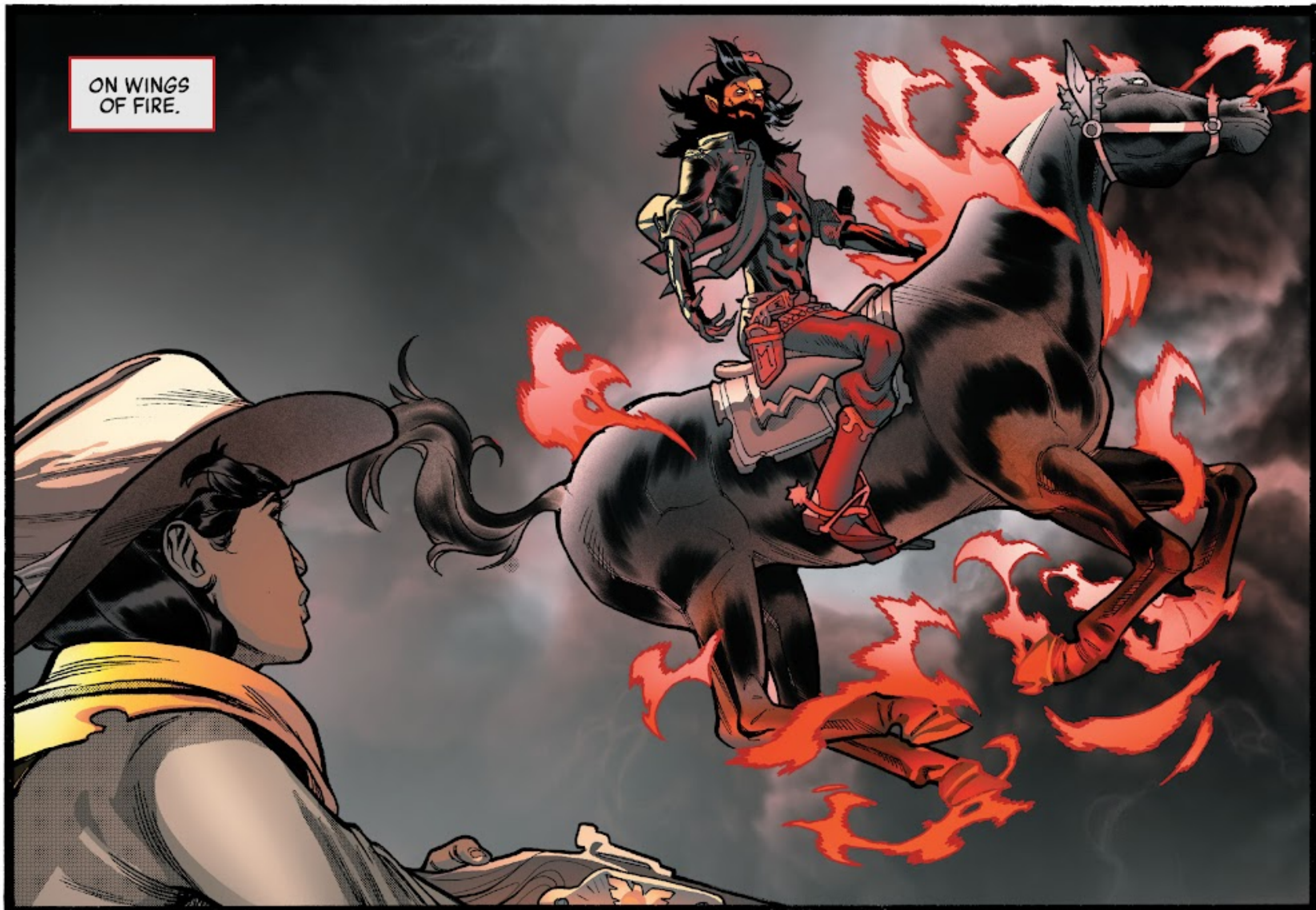
THEY FELL FOR WHAT
SEEMED LIKE FOREVER.
THE RIVER FELT LIKE IT
WAS FLOWING WITH
FLINT INSTEAD OF WATER
WHEN THEY HIT IT.

THE TWO OF THEM
SANK INTO THE
DEPTHS TOGETHER.

ONLY ONE ROSE
BACK UP AGAIN.
REBORN.



ON WINGS
OF FIRE.



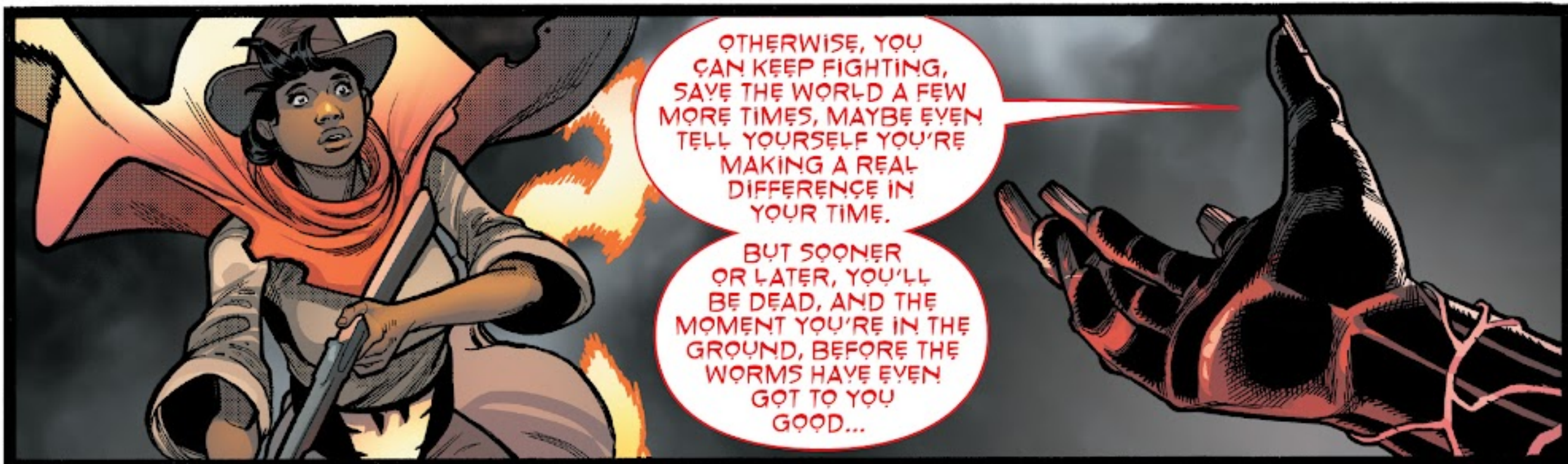
WHAT IF I
COULD GIVE YOU
BACK WHAT YOU
LOST IN THAT
RIVER?

WOULD YOU
TRADE IN YOUR
GUNS FOR A CHANCE
TO FEEL LOVED
AGAIN?



OTHERWISE, YOU
CAN KEEP FIGHTING,
SAVE THE WORLD A FEW
MORE TIMES, MAYBE EVEN
TELL YOURSELF YOU'RE
MAKING A REAL
DIFFERENCE IN
YOUR TIME.

BUT SOONER
OR LATER, YOU'LL
BE DEAD, AND THE
MOMENT YOU'RE IN THE
GROUND, BEFORE THE
WORMS HAVE EVEN
GOT TO YOU
GOOD...

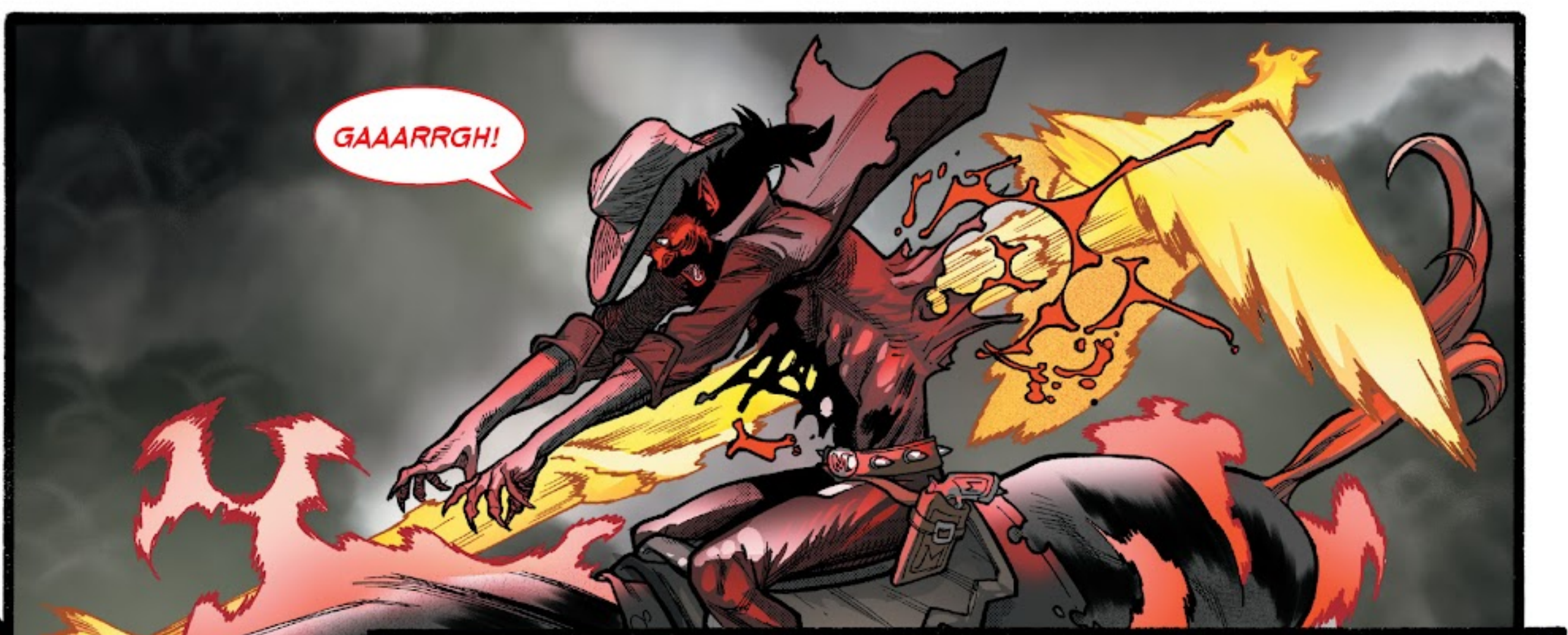


...THE WORLD
WILL ALREADY
HAVE **FORGOTTEN**
YOUR NAME.

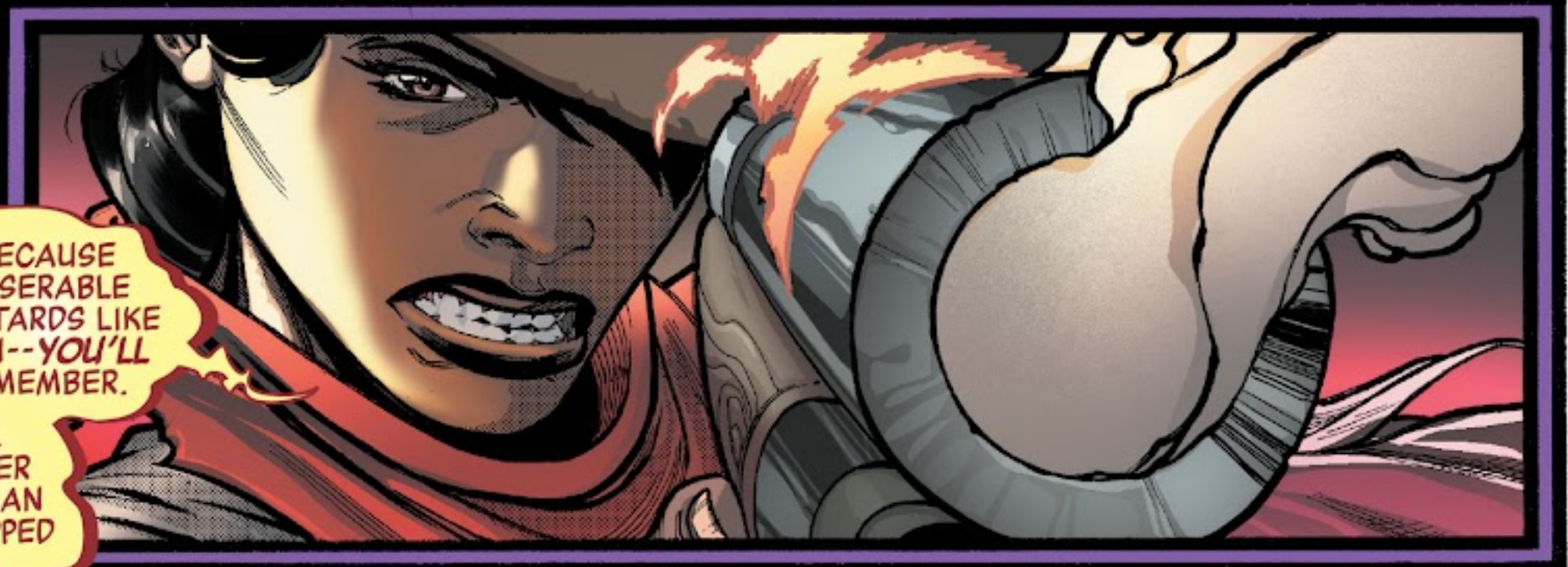
NO ONE WILL
REMEMBER THAT
YOU FOUGHT, THAT YOU
SUFFERED AND BLED,
THAT YOU EVER TOOK
A SINGLE BREATH.

SO TELL
ME, PHOENIX...
WHY EVEN
BOTHER?





GAAARRGH!

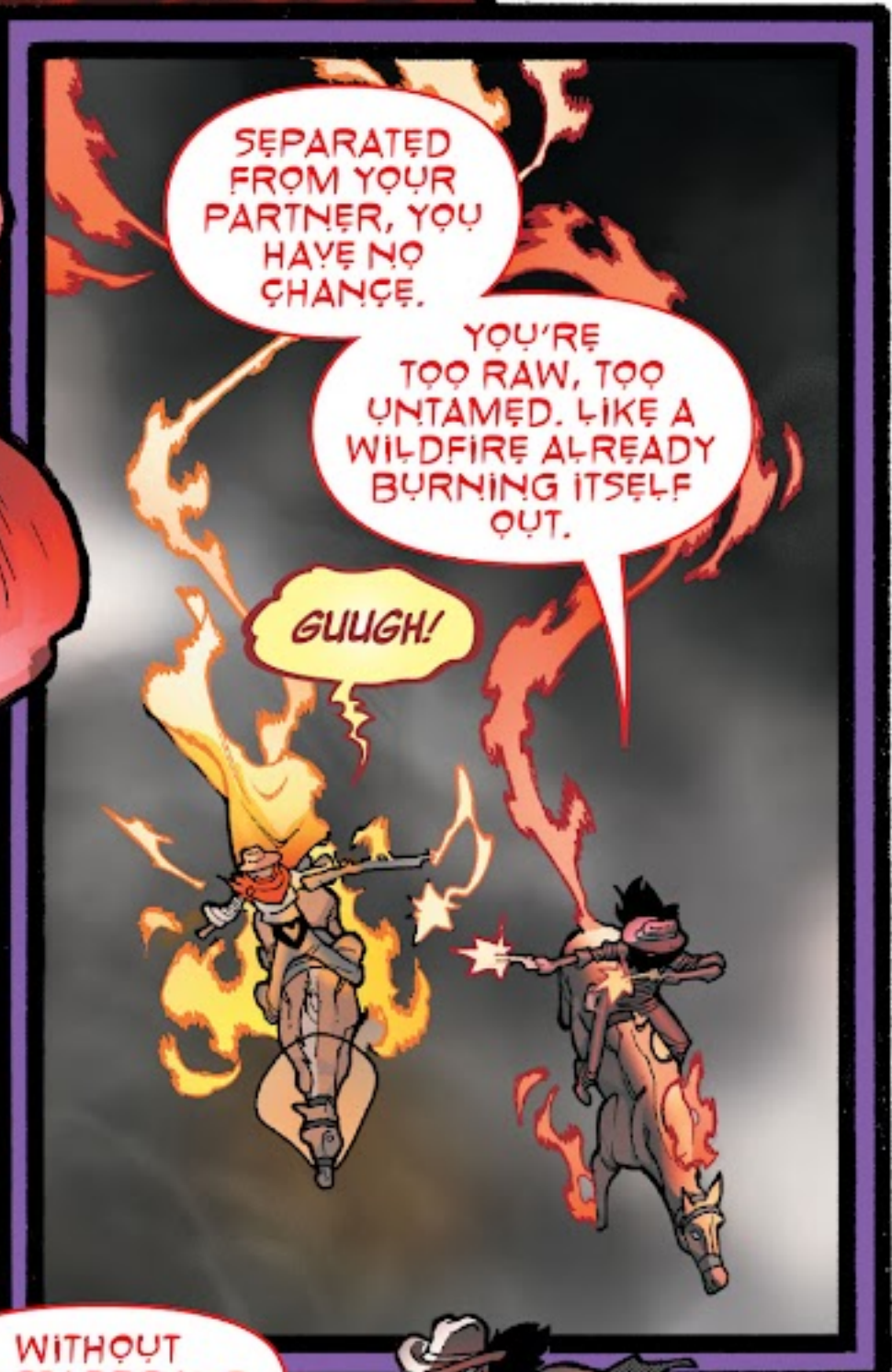


BECAUSE MISERABLE
BASTARDS LIKE
YOU-- YOU'LL
REMEMBER.

YOU'LL
REMEMBER
THE WOMAN
WHO STOPPED
YOU.



I'LL
REMEMBER
THAT YOU DIED
WITH MY GUN
IN YOUR
FACE!



SEPARATED
FROM YOUR
PARTNER, YOU
HAVE NO
CHANCE.

YOU'RE
TOO RAW, TOO
UNTAMED. LIKE A
WILDFIRE ALREADY
BURNING ITSELF
OUT.

GUUGH!



WITHOUT
THE STARBRAND,
YOU LOSE.



GOOD THING
THERE'S MORE
THAN ONE OF
US!



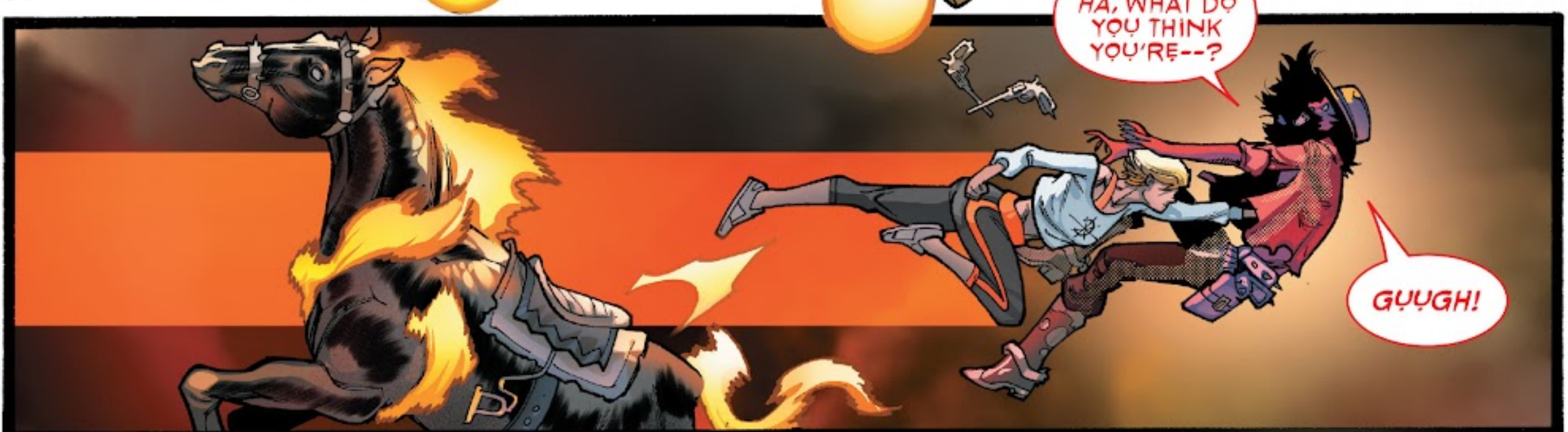
HAIL
MEPHISTO.
HAIL
STARK.

WHAT?!?!

YOU! I KNOW
THAT TECH!
BECAUSE IT'S
MINE! WHERE DID
YOU GET IT? WHO
ARE YOU?!

I'M THE
DEVIL'S RIGHT-
HAND MAN.

YOU?
HA, WHAT DO
YOU THINK
YOU'RE--?

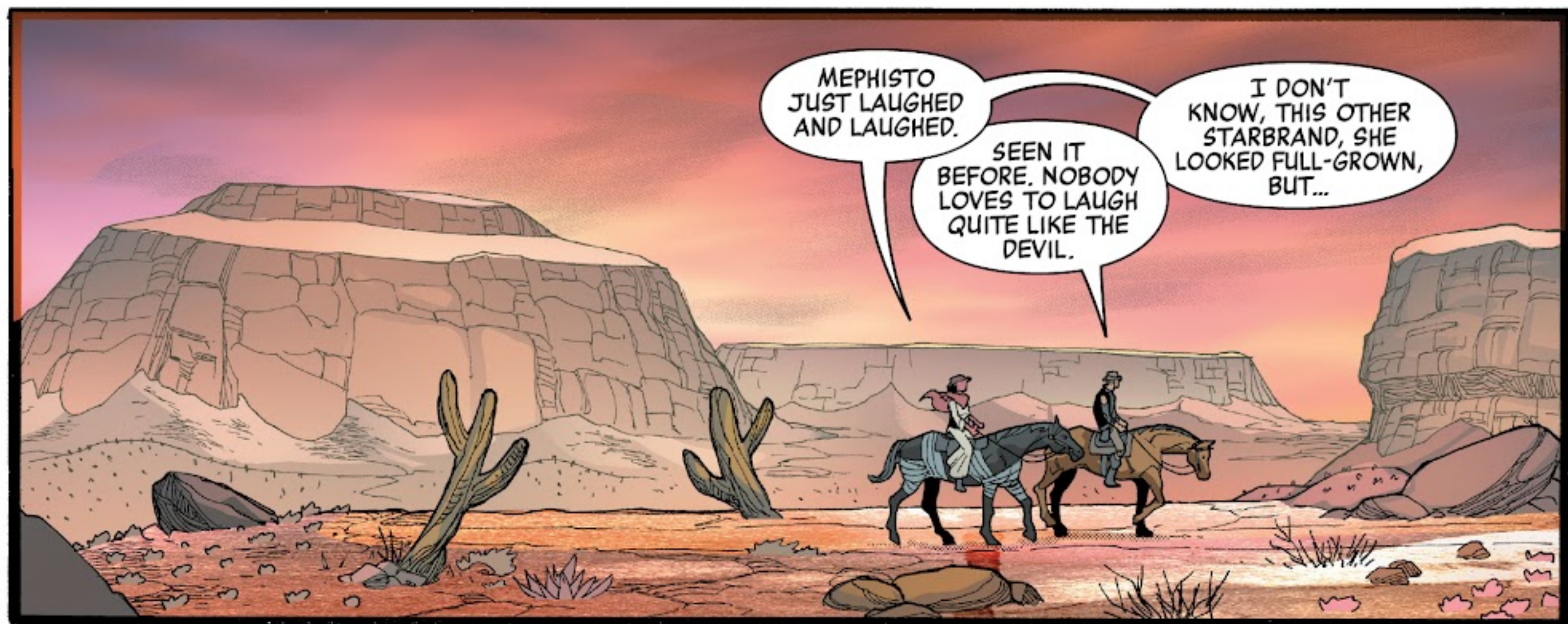


GUUGH!

"HE WAS
LAUGHING.

"AS THEY ALL FADED AWAY.
EVEN AS THE STARBRAND
WAS BEATING HIM."

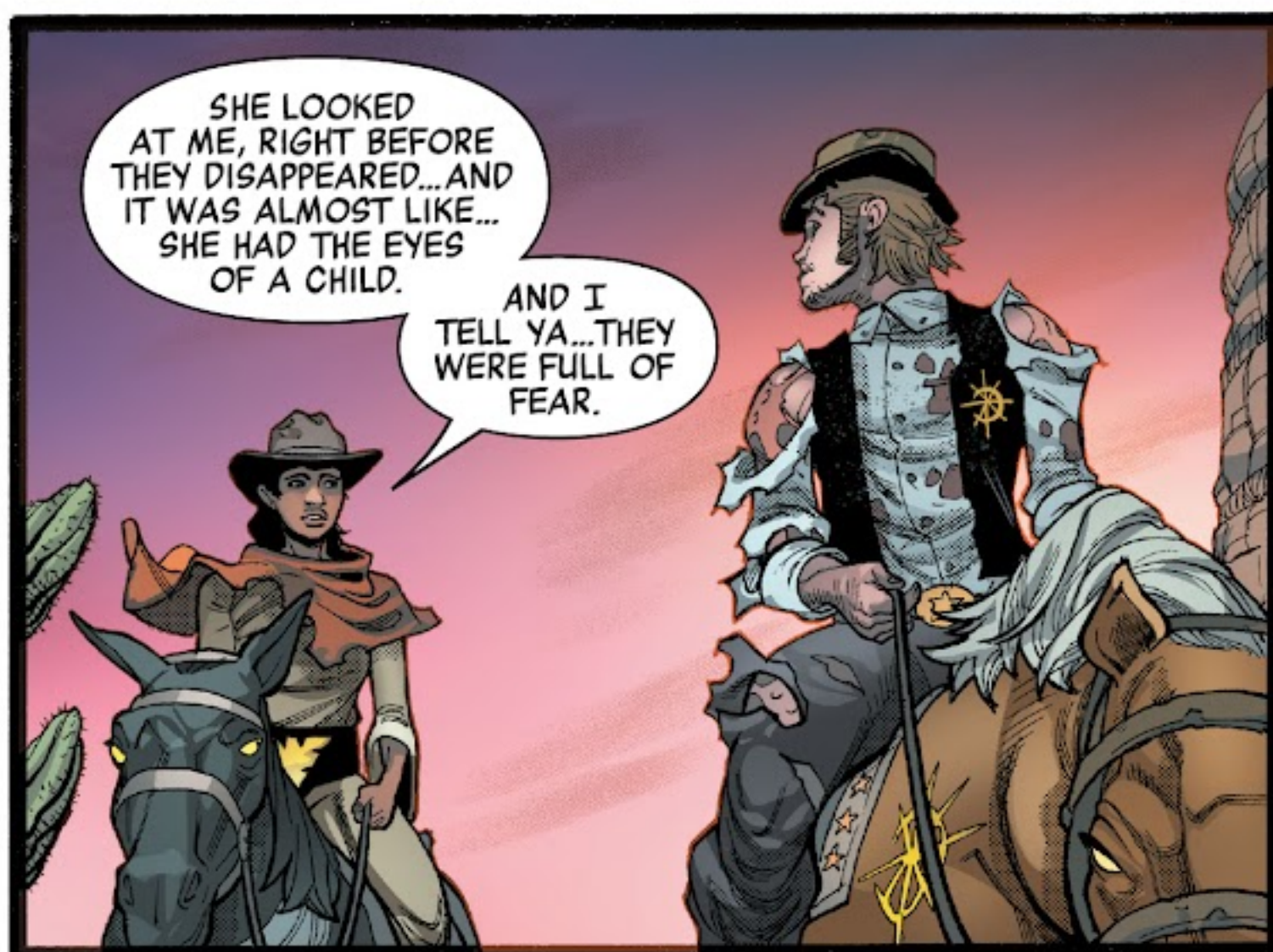




MEPHISTO
JUST LAUGHED
AND LAUGHED.

SEEN IT
BEFORE. NOBODY
LOVES TO LAUGH
QUITE LIKE THE
DEVIL.

I DON'T
KNOW, THIS OTHER
STARBRAND, SHE
LOOKED FULL-GROWN,
BUT...



SHE LOOKED
AT ME, RIGHT BEFORE
THEY DISAPPEARED...AND
IT WAS ALMOST LIKE...
SHE HAD THE EYES
OF A CHILD.

AND I
TELL YA...THEY
WERE FULL OF
FEAR.



WHOEVER THEM
HEROES WAS, I
FEEL LIKE THEY
NEED OUR
HELP.

THEY'RE OFF CHASING
THEIR MEPHISTO
THROUGH TIME.



BUT WE GOT
OUR OWN DEVILS
TO DEAL WITH
RIGHT HERE.

DEAL? DID
SOMEBODY SAY
THEY'RE LOOKING
FOR A DEAL?



YEAH, ME
AND MY PARTNER
HERE ARE BOTH
LOOKING TO MAKE
A DEAL.

AND
THE DEAL
IS...



...DRAW!



THE AVENGERS

EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES

#60



AN A.X.E. JUDGMENT DAY TIE-IN!
A Celestial informs Hawkeye that he has one day to justify his existence. As a benchmark, Hawkeye must prove that he brings at least as much joy and usefulness to the world as a randomly chosen mailbox. Which, admittedly, is a pretty high bar.

Avengers Assemble! Email us at MHEROES@MARVEL.COM and mark your messages "Okay to Print" for a chance to see them answered in future issues!

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